

THE MORNING NEWS

Your Source for local news in English

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Lynette Bernadina of Meta Social Club is crowned Mrs. Carnival 2014



Mrs. Carnival 2014 Lynette Bernadina being crowned



Prins and Pancho pick Lynette

ORANJESTAD -- This year, the Mrs. Carnival Pageant celebrated two landmark occasions, Aruba Diamond Jubilee Carnival and also its 20th anniversary as a carnival event.

There is enormous enthusiasm for this year's 60th Anniversary Carnival, which resulted in a record number of contenders for the Mrs. Carnival crown. It was originally and for many years a casual affair based on comedy and carnival spirit, aimed at showing you



1st Runner-Up Marylou Fradl-Thode

Best Speech, Best Costume and Mrs. Popular.

Marylou Fradl-Thode, representing the Fundacion Cas Pa Comunidad Arubano, or FCCA and Majestic Carnival Group, was named the First Runner Up. She also earned the SETAR Queen title through popular vote via SMS. Riri Botta, a veteran carnivalista, was the Champagne Carnival Group queen who garnered the Second Runner Up spot.

Meta Social Club and their candidate's indomitable spirit and quick wit, won the admiration of the judges and TV commentators. Departing Mrs. Carnival of 2013, Gladys Martina, performed a hilarious routine with a message: you are never too old to be beautiful and vibrantly alive, inside and out, and "No Wheelchair for me, Thank you!" as she passed on her crown to the 20th Anniversary Mrs. Carnival, Lynette Bernadina, a worthy successor. (see photo coverage on pg 2)

By Rosalie Klein

are never too old to compete for a queen crown. Despite its evolution to include polished performances, elegant gowns and breathtaking costumes, as the other pageants, judges demonstrated that it is that same humor and lively spirit that wins the day.

At the end of the evening, the candidate for the brand new carnival group Meta Social Club, Lynette Bernadina, who impressed all with her "Triple D" performance (Dushi, Delightful and Dancing) won not only the crown and title, but the categories of Best Show,

CARACAS (AFP) - Fugitive Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez calmly turned himself in to authorities Tuesday at a tumultuous rally in Caracas as his followers shouted "Freedom! Freedom!"

The government of President Nicolas Maduro had banned the opposition march after Lopez said he would use it to surrender, ringing the plaza with police and national guard anti-riot troops.

The surrender marked a dramatic inflection point after two tension-filled weeks of protests in the oil-rich country, led by students angry over rampant crime, deteriorating living conditions and jailings of demonstrators.

Maduro last week ordered Lopez's arrest on charges of homicide and inciting violence after violent street clashes in Caracas left three dead.

Defying a ban, thousands of Lopez's supporters turned

out dressed in white at the Plaza Brion after he called the march in a video message on Sunday, pledging to turn himself in if the government sought to arrest him.

Lopez, also in white, suddenly emerged in the crowd, climbing a statue of Cuban independence hero Jose Marti with a Venezuelan flag. After delivering a brief message to his cheering supporters, he surrendered to the National Guard.

"I present myself before an unjust justice, before a corrupt justice," said the 42-year-old Harvard-educated economist.

"If my incarceration serves to wake up a people... my infamous incarceration will have been worth it," he said to an explosion of cheers from the crowd.

He calmly walked under escort to a National Guard vehicle as his supporters pressed in around the vehicle, blocking its path.

Continued on pg 6

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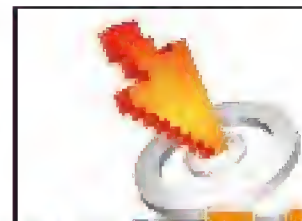
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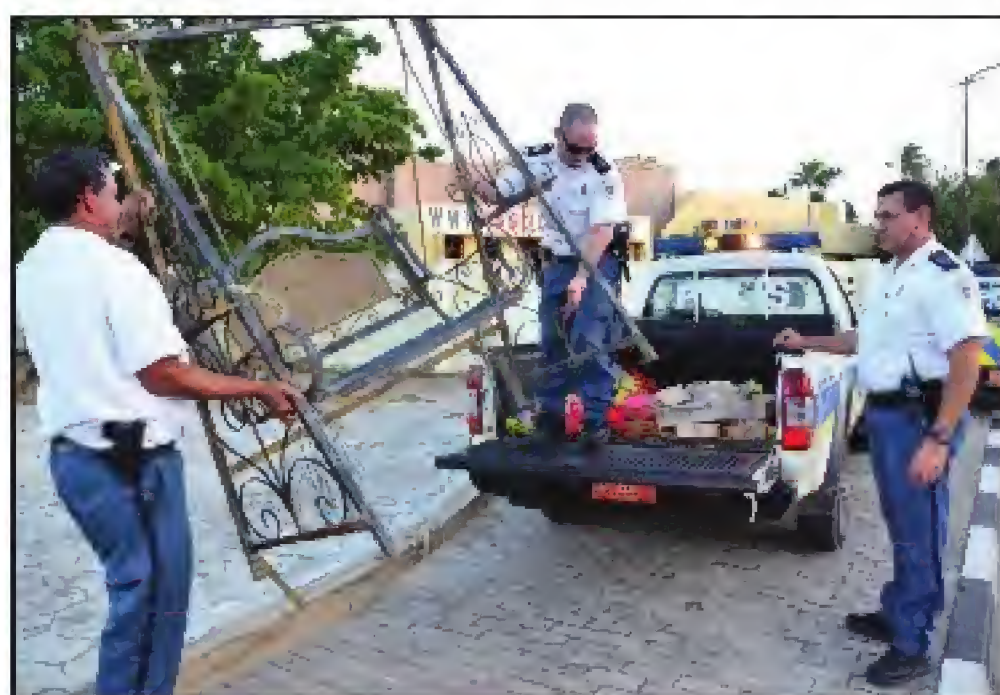
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Police: The public are allowed to reserve their spot on the Carnaval route on February 21st!



ORANJESTAD -- The Police wishes to inform the public that they are allowed to reserve their space on the Carnaval route this Friday, February 21st. The Police is asking everyone to take into account that BEFORE this date all objects on the Carnaval route will be removed. The only objects permitted on the route is Carnaval

trailers in their corresponding lots (kavel).

These past days the Police assisted by the Fire Department held a clean-up action on the routes of the Carnaval parades. Objects such as chairs, benches, crates, chains, ribbons, tires, ropes and much more were taken into possession. This clean up will continue until above mentioned date!

Cars parked along the route will also be removed. In the case the police tows the car the owner in order to retrieve their vehicle must present their license and all other documents of the vehicle must be up to date. A fee of Afl. 25 will be charged for each day the car stays in possession of the police. The towing charges of the vehicle will also be for the owner.

Those who reserves their space after February 21st must keep in mind that no sharp objects that may cause injury to the public can be used.

It is the habit of the community to put objects on the Carnaval route to reserve a good spot to stand or sit during the Carnaval parades, but this can only be done with and when the Police gives permission.

The Police request cooperation of the community to not put any objects on the Carnaval routes as yet and no cars on the sidewalks because everything will be removed! They will be controlling daily and will continue removing these objects until February 21st.

Last day to pay motor vehicle tax 2014 is February 28th!



ORANJESTAD -- Aruba's Tax Department wishes to inform the community that the due date to pay motor vehicle tax for 2014, has been prolonged by two weeks. The date was February 17th but due to the fact that the tax office received the number plates late in December and the quantity of clients that has not paid as yet it was decided to prolong the term.

The tax Department request their clients to not wait until the last moment take advantage of this opportunity as the date will not be prolonged again.



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Aruba's 60th Carnaval

Short and Sweet, San Nicolas hosts the first of the Diamond Jubilee Children's Carnival parades



SAN NICOLAS -- San Nicolas Carnival Parades always have a home, cozy feel to them, and this past Sunday, the Children's Parade through its streets again reinforced that great sense of community.

Participating groups included, in order, Don Flip Carnival Group, Baby Champagne, Deja Kids, Jolly/Whiz Kids, Little Groovers and TOB bringing up the rear. A special trailer was dedicated to the winners of the Chil-

dren's Roadmarch and Calypso Contest with their band, and the Reina Infantil, from Oranjestad Companashi, Sheqayli Ascencion adorned a special float in her elegant little gown.

The parade was awash

with brilliantly-hued feathered costumes and floats, along with millions of sequins and sparkly body make up. The various groups proudly displayed their creative efforts, for a charming spectacle for all. This coming

Sunday, February 23rd, will be the Oranjestad Children's Parade, beginning at 1:00 PM at the east end of Oranjestad, and finishing at the western border at the Valero Station on L.G. Smith Blvd.

Rosalie Klein

Aruba's tourism grows by 9.4% in January 2014

ORANJESTAD -- The government is very pleased with the positive figures for Aruba's tourism for the month of January 2014. The results for January shows an impressive growth compared to the figures of last year.

The percentage of growth surpasses all expectations; hence this must be shared with the Aruban community.

In January 2014 we counted 82,877 visitors to the island. This means that the results are strong for our tourism sector. In this month alone we saw a growth of 9.4%. YTD January 2014 counts a percentage of 5.2% of growth.

There was a strong flow from the Latin American market, where Chile showed a growth of 38.8%, Colombia with 37.7%, Ecuador with 37.5%, Brazil with 37.3% and Venezuela with 27.7%. This is a very important market in our tourism economy. The visitors from these destinations are heavy spenders.

There was also an increase in visitors from the American and European markets. The USA grew with a percentage of 5.4%, while Europe also grew by 8.5%. The majority of our European visitors came from England.

These figures truly demonstrate that Aruba's tourism is on the right track and is generating a desirable impact for the economy of our island.

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Auxiliary Registrar Offices closed for half day tomorrow

ORANJESTAD -- The government information office announces that tomorrow, February 20, all the Auxiliary Registrar Offices around the island will be closed for half a day. The closure is for the employees to receive an upgrading training in service. The upgrading is in connection with the Multi-functional

facilities recently introduced by the government for all the Auxiliary Registrar Offices.

The offices will close for all public services at 11:30 a.m.

The government information office kindly asks everyone to take notice of this and apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause.

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Fugitive Venezuela opposition leader surrenders at rally

Cont. from pg 1

Shouts of "Freedom, Freedom!" and "It's going to fall, it's going to fall, this corrupt government is going to fall" rose from the crowd.

Lopez himself got on the loudspeaker from within the vehicle to appeal for calm.

Three rings of national police backed by a second line of National Guard anti-riot troops with light armored vehicles were positioned around the plaza.

Meanwhile, the government summoned its followers to rallies of its own in an area of downtown Caracas where the opposition march was to end, raising the risk of a violent confrontation.

"They will not pass"

"Not one single opposition march is going to enter the territory of Libertador municipality," said National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello, referring to the city's western downtown district, where the opposition march was to end.

"They will not pass. It is not authorized," Cabello said late Monday on his new nightly television program.

The opposition protesters turned out anyway. Some carried signs that read: "24,763 violent deaths in 2013. We are more than a statistic."

"We are expressing the frustration we feel. The country is in chaos, there are no supplies in the hospitals, we

are sick of the insecurity. I want a Venezuela of progress," said Satle Oviedo, a 27-year-old hospital worker.

Under the slogan "the exit," Lopez and other opposition leaders have pushed for anti-government street protests to force a "constitutional change."

There is no provision for recall elections until April 2016, and Maduro, who was elected in April 2013, has said he will never resign.

The confrontational approach has aroused misgivings within the opposition coalition formed in 2012 to defeat the late Hugo Chavez.

But Henrique Capriles, the two-time opposition presidential candidate and governor of the state of Miranda, said he would take part in Tuesday's march even though he does not think the time is ripe to try to force the government from power.

"We may have differences but we feel solidarity," Capriles said.

- Tense US-Venezuela ties

The tensions generated by the protests have spilled into the international arena as well.

On Sunday, Maduro ordered the expulsion of three US diplomats, accusing them of meeting with student leaders under the guise of offering them visas.



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Iran, world powers on long road to final nuclear deal

VIENNA (AFP) - Nuclear talks between Iran and world powers entered new territory Tuesday as negotiators embarked on what both sides predicted will be a long and difficult path towards a lasting deal.

The aimed-for historic accord would essentially let Iran retain its civilian nuclear programme, but on a modest scale and with enough oversight to make developing atomic weapons all but impossible.

Success could lead to Tehran and Washington normalising relations after a 35-year chill and could even bear fruit in other areas, such as Syria.

But failure might lead to conflict.

The scheduled three-day meeting in Vienna between

Iran, the United States, China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany follows an interim deal struck in Geneva in November that they now want to transform into a permanent agreement.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who Tuesday took to Twitter to denounce nuclear weapons, set a cautious tone Monday when he said this effort would "go nowhere" but that he was not against trying.

"It is probably as likely that we won't get an agreement as it is that we will," said one senior US administration official.

"But these negotiations are the best chance we have ever had."

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was more upbeat, saying late

Tuesday that a deal was "totally achievable" but needed "some innovation and some forward thinking".

On Tuesday the parties held two plenary sessions as well as several bilateral meetings, including a "productive" 80-minute one between the Iranian and US delegations, a senior US State Department official said.

A spokesman for the world powers' lead negotiator, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, said the aim of this Vienna round was a "workable framework to facilitate these negotiations".

Iran has long been suspected of seeking atomic weapons, despite its denials, and the US and Israel -- the latter assumed to have a large atomic arsenal itself -- have never ruled out military action.

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UNICEF calls for release of Homs children

GENEVA (AFP) - Syria must free dozens of children held in an interrogation centre after they were evacuated from rebel-held parts of the city of Homs, the UN children's agency said on Tuesday.

"As of today, there are 56 children at the facility, including 34 boys between (ages) 15 and 18, 10 boys under 15, and 12 girls below 18," said Marixie Mercado, spokeswoman for UNICEF.

"Most of the children under 15 and the girls are there with their families because their fathers or brothers are still being processed," she told reporters.

But the group also included two unaccompanied children, one of them a seven-year-old girl whose family was still in Homs, and the other a teenage boy whose parents were in Lebanon but who had relatives in Homs.

"UNICEF is advocating for the expedited release of all remaining children," Mercado said.

Under government seige since June 2012 and surviving on the barest of supplies, residents of parts of Homs held by opposition fighters have gradually been evacuated since February 7.

The operation took place after a UN-brokered truce in the city, which has been a hub of the revolt against the regime of President Bashar al-Assad.

A total of 1,417 people have so far made it out of the Old City of Homs, a rebel bastion which has been pounded on a daily basis by government troops.

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Ukraine police storm protest camp after eight die in clashes

KIEV (AFP) - Protesters hurled Molotov cocktails as Ukrainian riot police firing stun grenades and water cannon stormed the main anti-government protest camp Tuesday, after the bloodiest day of protests left at least eight people dead and triggered international alarm.

Police broke through barricades with armoured vehicles, but faced thousands of protesters armed with stones, fireworks and petrol bombs who had refused to obey an ultimatum to evacuate Kiev's iconic Independence Square.

The European Union, United States and United Nations were among the international voices calling for calm as recent signs of reconciliation rapidly deteriorated into the deadliest day in nearly three months of protests aimed at bringing down the government of President Viktor Yanukovich.

Russia warned of a "civil war" it said was stoked by Western interference.

Earlier, opposition leader Vitali Klitschko had called on women and children to quit the encampment ahead of a

police deadline calling for calm to be restored before 6:00pm.

But some 25,000 people stood their ground as police with megaphones declared the launch of an "anti-terrorist operation", raining down tear gas and stun grenades on the protesters, while a second line of police armed with Kalashnikov rifles advanced slowly into the camp.

The attack came at the end of a day of fighting that had left at least five civilians and three policemen dead, and turned central Kiev into a war

zone.

Protesters had seized back control of Kiev's city hall, with around 30 activists setting up a first aid point inside the building, which the opposition had left on Sunday as part of an amnesty deal with the authorities.

They also briefly seized Yanukovich's party headquarters, AFP reporters said, after several hundred attacked it with petrol bombs and smashed their way inside before retreating as smoke billowed from the windows.

EU foreign policy chief

Catherine Ashton said she was "deeply worried about the grave new escalation".

UN chief Ban Ki-moon called for restraint and dialogue, while NATO head Anders Fogh Rasmussen urged "all parties to refrain from violence and to urgently resume dialogue, including through the parliamentary process".

Ukraine has been wracked by anti-government demonstrations since Yanukovich in November rejected an EU pact in favour of closer ties with historical master Russia.

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Social contact, regular exercise key to living longer

CHICAGO (AFP) - Social contact and regular exercise are key to aging well and living a longer life, according to newly presented research.

In fact, feeling extremely lonely can increase an older person's chances of premature death by 14 percent, an impact nearly as strong as that of a disadvantaged socioeconomic status, according to John Cacioppo, psychology professor at the University of Chicago.

He noted that a meta-analysis of several studies published in 2010 showed that social isolation had twice the impact on the risk of death as obesity.

Cacioppo presented the findings Sunday at an annual conference in Chicago of the American Association for the

Advancement of Science.

The research carried out on a group of 20,000 people revealed adverse health effects of feeling alone, including sleep problems, high blood pressure, impaired immune cells and depression.

Often, loneliness is accompanied by a sedentary lifestyle, which can significantly weaken one's health.

Simple exercise such as walking regularly at a good pace can't just cut the risk of cardiovascular and Alzheimer's disease by 50 percent -- it can also clearly slow down the normal aging process of an older person's brain, Kirk Erickson of the University of Pittsburgh told AFP.

At the conference, the assis-

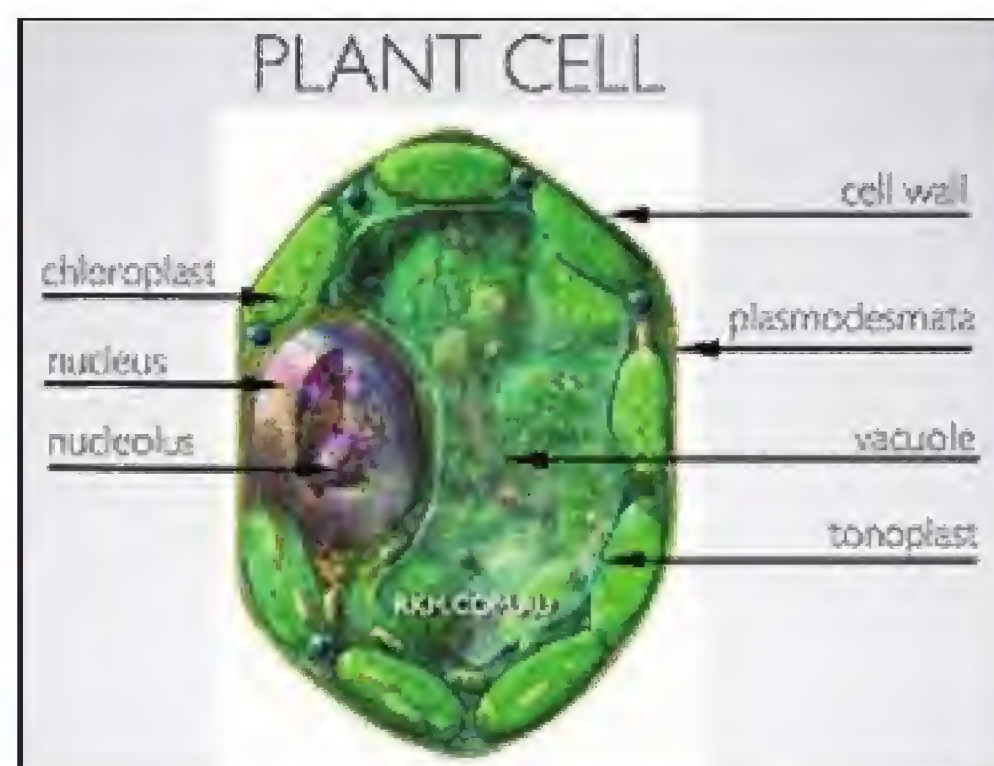
tant professor of psychology presented new details of a study published in 2011 that involved 120 people aged 65 and older.

With age, the brain shrinks, he said. Physical activity, however, helps improve its overall functioning and, in particular, increases the volume of the hippocampus by 2 percent, which reverses cerebral aging by one to two years and boosts mental capacities.

"For one, this research has demonstrated the brain remains highly modifiable late in adulthood," Erickson said.

What's more, it's apparently not necessary to do a lot of exercise to get that result -- a "modest amount" is all it takes, he said.

'Game changing' Japan stem-cell study questioned



TOKYO (AFP) - A Japanese research institute Tuesday said it was probing its own study that promised a 'game changer' way to create stem cells, a feat hailed as revolutionary for the fast-developing field.

The findings, published by Japanese researcher Haruko Obokata and American partners in a January edition of the British journal Nature, outlined a simple and low-tech approach in the quest to grow transplant tissue in the lab.

But the national institute Riken said Tuesday it had started an investigation over "questions" about the methodology and input data of the study, appointing several in-house and outside experts to pore over the revolutionary report. Obokata works for the institute.

At issue are allegations that the researchers used erroneous image data for the high-profile article, local media reported.

"The experts have already started hearings for the researchers involved in the articles," an institute spokesman said Tuesday, but declined to give further details.

But for the moment the in-

stitute is standing by the results -- a spokesman insisted the "findings themselves are unsalable."

Stem cells are primitive cells that, as they grow, differentiate into the various specialised cells that make up the different organs -- the brain, the heart, kidney and so on.

The goal is to create stem cells in the lab and nudge them to grow into these differentiated cells, thus replenishing organs damaged by disease or accident.

The researchers' groundbreaking findings said that white blood cells in newborn mice were returned to a versatile state by incubating them in a solution with high acidity for 25 minutes, followed by a five minute spin in a centrifuge and a seven-day spell of immersion in a growth culture.

Called stimulus-triggered acquisition of pluripotency (STAP) cells, the innovation breaks new ground.

Until now, only plant cells, and not mammal cells, have been found to reprogramme back to a youthful state through simple environmental factors.

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French TV channels seek protection from Google, Netflix

PARIS (AFP) - The heads of France's three largest private television networks have asked the government to protect them from US competitors like Google, Apple and Netflix who are set to enter the market.

The bosses of TF1, Canal+ and M6, alarmed by the impending arrival of the American tech giants, have sought a meeting with Culture Minister Aurelie Filippetti to discuss "urgent measures" to reform the sector.

They said they were worried by the "upheavals caused by the arrival of new actors" who had become leading providers of entertainment content across the world.

The TV chiefs said they were also concerned by the "outrageous tax optimisation" used by the US companies.

France is one of a growing number of nations to pursue more aggressively what they see as abuse of tax and accounting rules that allows some multinational companies to pay less tax.

Google for instance has reduced the amount of tax it pays in France by funnelling most of its revenue through a Dutch-registered intermediary and then to a Bermuda-registered holding, Google Ireland Limited, before reporting it in low-tax Ireland.

The French television heads said the government was worsening the situation in a stagnant sector by inviting new operators.



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Fallon sweeps US ratings with 'Tonight Show' debut



NEW YORK (AFP) - Jimmy Fallon handily took the gold medal for non-Olympic television programming Monday when he made his debut appearance as host of NBC's "The Tonight Show" succeeding Jay Leno.

Twenty percent of households in 56 local markets watching television at midnight (0500 GMT) tuned in to Fallon, according to preliminary Nielsen ratings data shared by NBC on Tuesday.

Complete national viewership figures are still pending, but entertainment trade journal Variety said the initial data suggests as many as 10 million Americans stayed up to watch the Fallon premiere.

That doesn't take into account those who went onto the Internet on Tuesday to catch segments posted on YouTube or on the Hulu video streaming

website co-owned by NBC.

NBC said the show -- which started a half-hour later than usual due to Winter Olympics coverage -- was "easily the number-one non-Olympic telecast" on Monday, as well as the evening's dominant late-night program.

Trailing well behind were CBS's "The Late Show with David Letterman" and ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" each with five percent of households tuned in.

Leno, 63, signed off from "The Tonight Show" after 22 years on February 6 as NBC relocated the show from Los Angeles to New York and put Fallon, 39, in the host's chair in a bid to attract a younger, hipper demographic.

"I really don't know how I got here," said Fallon to a cheering studio audience after passing through a blue curtain to take the reins of one of the greatest franchises in American television.

His guests Monday included rapper/actor Will Smith and Irish rock band U2, performing atop Rockefeller Center, plus a parade of celebrities including Lady Gaga, Lindsay Lohan, Mike Tyson and Robert De Niro who paid back mock \$100 bets that he'd never host the show.

"Welcome to 11:30, bitch!" shouted Stephen Colbert, who hosts his own political late-night show on Comedy Central

in the same time slot, as he ceremoniously dumped a bucket of pennies onto the new kid on the block.

Early Bird Menu

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm



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Sony says PlayStation 4 sales exceed 5.3 million



TOKYO (AFP) - Japan's Sony said Tuesday it has sold more than 5.3 million PlayStation 4 consoles three months after its release, as the firm battles Microsoft and Nintendo in the lucrative games sector.

The eagerly-awaited PlayStation, which sold more than one million units in just one day after its November 15 debut in North America, easily cleared a worldwide target of 5.0 million units before March.

The initial target was reached even before it is released in its home market of Japan on February 22.

PS4 sales were nearly double that of Microsoft's Xbox One console in the US market last month, Sony said last week, citing figures released by industry tracker NPD Group.

Rival Nintendo launched its new Wii U console late last year. It took more than a year for the video game giant to sell 5.36 million units.

Data from 35,000 AT&T customers sought by secret court

WASHINGTON (AFP) - AT&T said Tuesday that a secretive US court ordered data turned over from more than 35,000 customers in six months as the telecom giant released its first "transparency report."

AT&T joined other telecom and Internet firms in releasing broad ranges of numbers following an agreement with authorities aimed at providing the public with more information on US data collection for national security investigations.

The transparency report, covering the first six months of 2013, said AT&T received between zero and 999 requests for customer content under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act affecting between 35,000 and 35,999 accounts.

Under a separate listing, it said "non-content" data, which could be merely the user's identity, affected between zero and 999 accounts.

The company also received between 2,000 and 2,999 "national security letters" -- which are generally FBI requests in terrorism investigations without a court order -- affecting between 4,000 and 4,999 accounts.

"We take our responsibility to protect your information and privacy very seriously, and we pledge to continue to do so to the fullest extent possible and always in compliance with the law of the country where the relevant service is provided," AT&T said in a statement with the report.

"Like all companies, we must provide information to government and law enforcement agencies to comply with court orders, subpoenas, lawful discovery requests and other legal requirements. We ensure that these requests are valid and that our responses comply with the law and our own policies."

US authorities, facing legal challenges and a public campaign for more transparency, agreed last month to allow some information on national security requests but only in broad ranges, and with a six-month delay.

The deal came in response to pressure from the tech sector following leaked National Security Agency documents outlining vast surveillance of online and phone communications.

AT&T also said it received 301,816 requests from US law enforcement in civil and criminal investigations. It rejected the requests in 3,756 cases and provided only partial data in 13,707 other cases.

Radiation detected at New Mexico nuclear plant

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - US investigators were taking samples Sunday at a New Mexico underground nuclear waste site where airborne radiation was detected, though authorities stressed they had found no contamination.

Officials monitoring the possible radiation leak said there was no danger to people or the environment at the Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, the nation's first repository to seal away radioactive waste, mostly plutonium, used for defense research and the production of nuclear weapons.

The waste is dumped 2,150 feet (655 meters) underground in disposal rooms excavated in an ancient, stable salt formation.

No employees were underground when the continuous air monitor at WIPP near Carlsbad, New Mexico detected underground radiation at 11:30 pm Friday (0630 GMT Saturday), an agency statement said.

It said no staffer was found to be contaminated by the radiation.

Employees on the surface were told to shelter in place as a precautionary measure and were cleared to leave the site.

The agency stressed that "no contamination has been found on any equipment, personnel or facilities."

As soon as the airborne radiation was detected underground at the site WIPP's ventilation system automatically switched to filtration

mode in order to prevent air exchange with the surface.

Investigators have not yet identified the source of the radiation, but WIPP said the site's system of air monitors and protective filtration system "continue to function as designed."

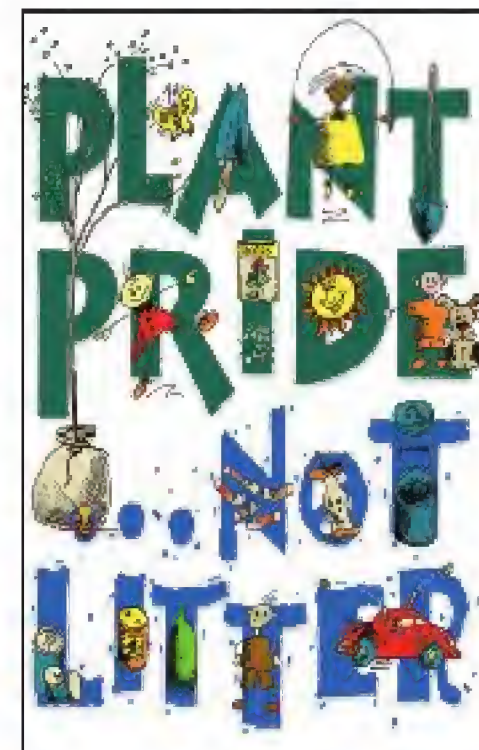
The site was shut down and not performing active operations at the time, according to Gill.

Earlier this month, an underground blaze prompted the evacuation of a different part of the site, after a truck hauling salt caught fire. Several workers suffered smoke inhalation.

But officials said the blaze was nowhere near radioactive material.

Material dumped at the site includes plutonium-contami-

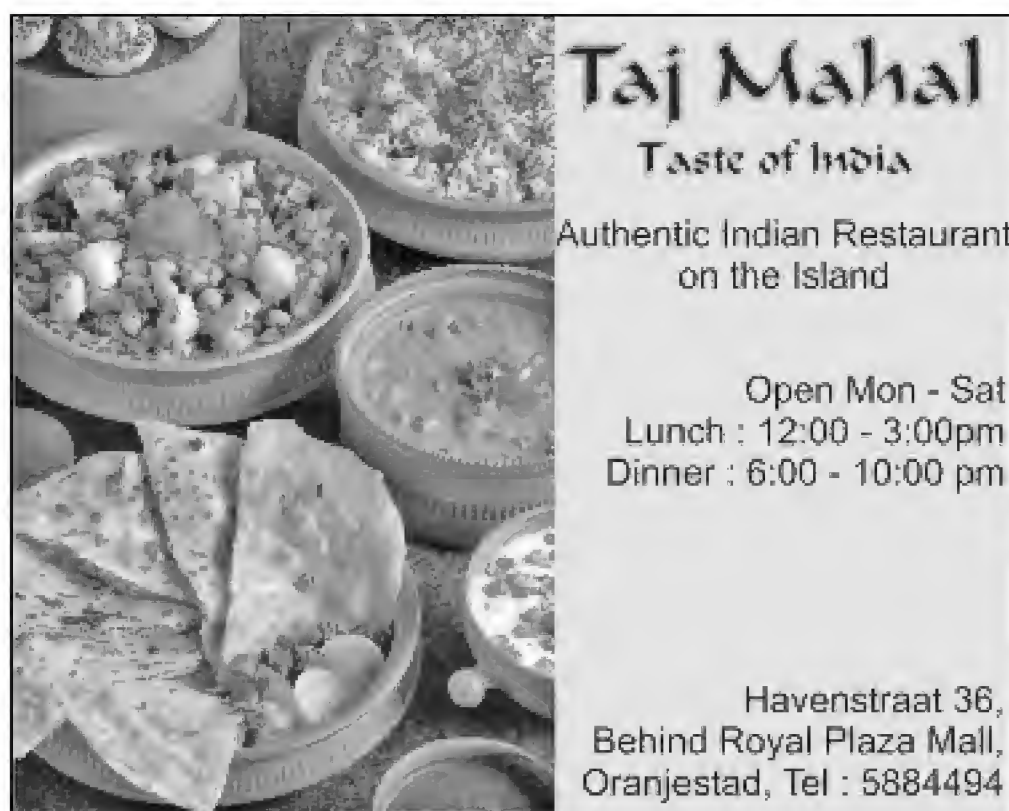
nated waste from the Los Alamos National Laboratory, about 300 miles (500 kilometers) away, also in New Mexico.



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Petronas signs with YPF over Argentina gas, shale

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Malaysian oil giant Petronas on Tuesday signed a preliminary agreement with Argentinian firm YPF to invest in the giant gas and shale oil field at Vaca Muerta, a statement said.

Petronas has expressed interest in a shale oil field in Neuquen province at the foot of the Andes in western Argentina, said a statement from YPF, which was nationalized in 2012 at the expense of Repsol.

Argentina has launched a global drive for foreign investment in Vaca Muerta, seen as one of the most potentially lu-

crative fields in the world.

German firm Wintershall, US giant Chevron and Chinese-Argentinian company Bidas have already announced more than \$5 billion worth of investment seeking to exploit unconventional hydrocarbons at Vaca Muerta.

French company Total is conducting exploration at the site while Russia's Gazprom and Mexico's Pemex have also been approached.

Argentina reported an energy deficit in 2013 of \$8 billion and is keen to boost domestic production to limit imports.

British insurers called in for floods talks

LONDON (AFP) - Insurance chiefs were called in for talks with the British government on Tuesday about payouts over the widespread flooding that has left thousands of homes submerged, amid signs that bills could run into hundreds of millions of pounds.

River levels are expected to fall gradually this week, though the misery is unlikely to end any time soon for the towns and villages affected.

With groundwater levels high after the wettest January since 1766 in southern England, it could take several weeks for water to drain away from flooded land.

Insurance industry chiefs held a first monthly meeting with floods minister Dan Rogerson at the Cabinet Office ministry in London.

Insurers have paid out £14 million (\$23 million, 17 million euros) since December in emergency claims, typically

between £500 and £3,000.

A further £24 million has been paid out for emergency accommodation, according to the Association of British Insurers (ABI).

Their insurers dealt with more than 170,000 claims for damage caused between December 23 and January 8. The flooding spread later in January.

Insurance firms pledged to look at their use of costly telephone lines for customers calling for help. Consumer body Which? said claimants were often running up bills of up to 41 pence per minute.

Rogerson said the industry had "got the message" on call charges.

ABI director general Otto Thoresen said the situation was "under control", while insurers "emphasised the long recovery process ahead and their commitment to helping customers".

US-EU trade talks 'on track' but tough hurdles ahead

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US-EU talks on a transatlantic free trade zone are moving ahead but still face their toughest challenge, cutting back regulatory differences, Europe's top negotiator Karel de Gucht said Tuesday.

Eight months into negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), de Gucht, the European Union commissioner for trade, said he and his US counterpart agreed that "things are on track."

"The consequence is that the next phase is going to be harder going. This is where real negotiations begin," he said.

De Gucht spent Monday and Tuesday in discussions with US Trade Representative Michael Froman in Washington to take stock of the TTIP talks, aimed at creating what could be the world's largest and richest free-trade zone.

Teams of experts from both sides have met three times since last year, and de Gucht said the two sides had identified areas of agreement, but more so marked out their differences.

"Certainly, the marked-out areas are still larger than the common ground. But we now have a clear picture of the whole field," he said.

A key challenge will be the haggling over issues on labor and the environment, where the sides have markedly different standards that could be tested.

"We need to make absolutely sure that transatlantic trade and investment supports, rather than undermines, our high standards on these sustainable development issues. We will not sacrifice them for commercial gain," said de Gucht.

Most difficult though will be harmonizing regulatory differences that hamper trade, which go well beyond traditional trade issues like tariffs to environmental and health protection and involve issues of biology and chemistry.

De Gucht underlined examples of where tensions have already arisen between the two sides, apart from the TTIP talks, and where he said EU officials would not modify their stance: EU restrictions on imports of US beef raised with growth hormones, and on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) increasingly common in US food and food products.

"Let me be very clear again: we do not even discuss hormone beef in TTIP and we will not at any point in our discussions," de Gucht said.

"Why? Because hormone beef is prohibited in Europe, and we do not intend to change this. And our American partners know this very well."

As for GMO foods, he said, Europe's extremely tight legislative restrictions on the products "will have to be observed, and nothing less."

Both de Gucht and Froman said they are committed to fashioning a deal despite the political challenges any pact will face on both sides of the Atlantic.

While US stocks closed mostly higher Tuesday as investors weighed mixed company news and an unexpected slump in home builder confidence.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average shed 23.99 points

(0.15 percent) at 16,130.40.

The tech-rich Nasdaq Composite climbed 28.76 (0.68 percent) to 4,272.78, while the S&P 500 index, a broad measure of the markets, advanced 2.13 (0.12 percent) to 1,840.76.

President Barack Obama's plans to raise the minimum wage could lift 900,000 people above the poverty line but may cost half a million jobs, a congressional watchdog said Tuesday.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office report offered ammunition for both the White House and Republicans in what is likely to be a tense debate ahead of mid-term congressional elections in November.

Obama unveiled a proposal to raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 an hour in his State of the Union address last month as he set about closing income disparity -- an increasingly important theme in US politics.

The CBO survey said that, if implemented, which would take until the second half of 2016, the "\$10.10 option would reduce total employment by about 500,000 workers, or 0.3 percent."

Republicans have long argued that raising the minimum wage would hurt the economy and employment as it would prompt small businesses to tighten belts and lay off some workers.

A report estimated that real incomes would rise by \$5 billion for families currently living under the poverty line, lifting about 900,000 people above it.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

D	A	M	A	R	I	S	K	L	U	M
A	X	E	P	E	R	U	N	A	S	A
L	I	T	P	O	K	E	I	C	E	S
I	S	S	U	E	D	I	G	E	S	T
M	A	C	B	E	T	H				
D	I	S	P	L	A	Y	S	T	A	L
A	N	T	L	T	D	B	O	Y		
B	A	S	I	S	H	A	W	K	E	Y
T	I	R	E	D	O	F				
S	T	U	C	C	O		O	C	C	U
P	O	S	H	A	M	I	O	R	E	
C	O	M	E	M	A	N	E	N	I	N
A	L	A	S	S	E	N	D	S	S	E



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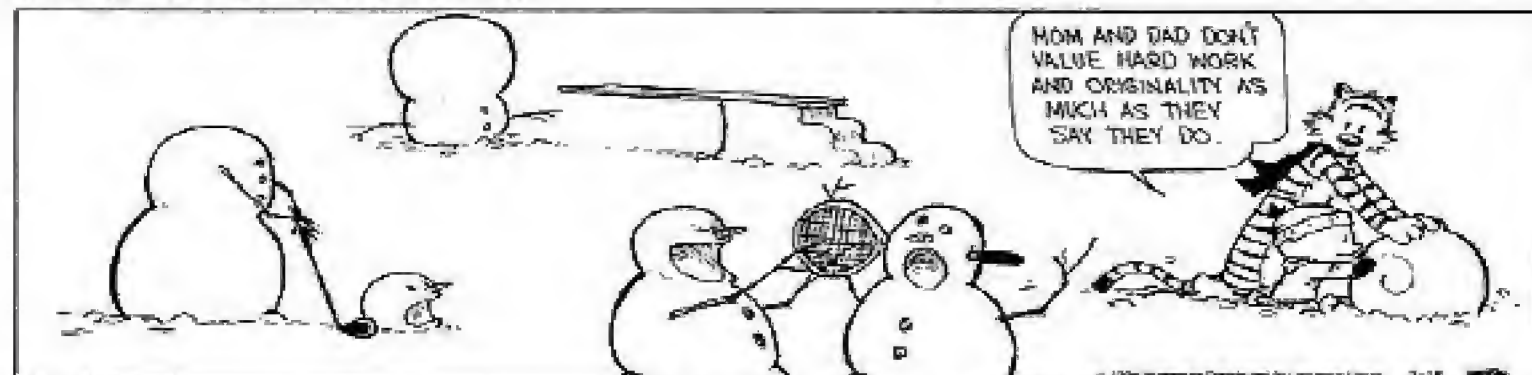
PICKLES



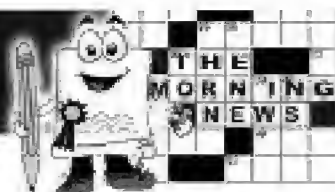
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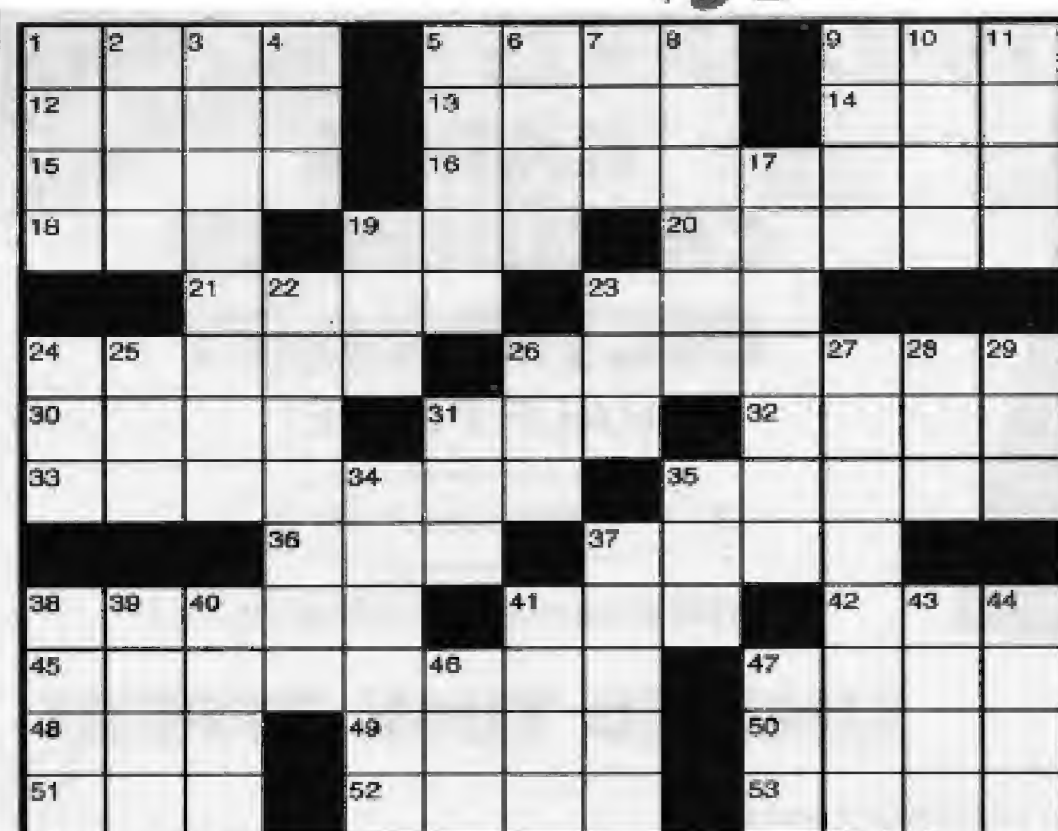
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ACROSS

1. Bill of Rights defenders (abbr.)
5. Casual try
9. Actress Sothorn
12. Palooka and Bazooka
13. Vigilant
14. Bread choice
15. Alack's partner
16. Stressed
18. Home (abbr.)
19. Noah's transport
20. Beats
21. Clip neatly
23. Sailor's yes
24. Rope strand
26. Coats with flour
30. Like (2 wds.)

31. Pack groceries
32. VIP's car
33. Original inhabitants
35. Lahr and Parks
36. Pot topper
37. Marisol's house
38. Closes violently
41. Calculating
42. Natl. security org.
45. Interpret
47. Aliens' crafts
48. Grain morsel
49. Emanation
50. Disagreeable
51. Grid scores (abbr.)
52. Pun or gang ender

53. Furtive whisper

DOWN

1. Slightly open
2. Composer Porter
3. Smallest degree (2 wds.)
4. Ship's letters
5. Throng
6. Bulletin board pin
7. Circle part
8. "___ Birdie" (2 wds.)
9. Liberal ___
10. No, to Yuri
11. Beatty and others
17. Record players' needs

19. Broadcast
22. Shoots a movie again
23. Chile's neighbor (abbr.)
24. Devotee
25. "The Lady ___ Tramp" (2 wds.)
26. Prosecutors (abbr.)
27. Spotted ruminants
28. Ambulance worker (abbr.)
29. Call for help
31. Napper's retreat
34. Panoramas
35. Beagle's howl
37. Like glass
38. Glasgow gent
39. Laundry quantity
40. Picnic invaders
41. Absolutely convinced
43. Feathery shawls
44. Ain't, correctly
46. Groove
47. Ref's colleague

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Care Center
Tel: 5696910

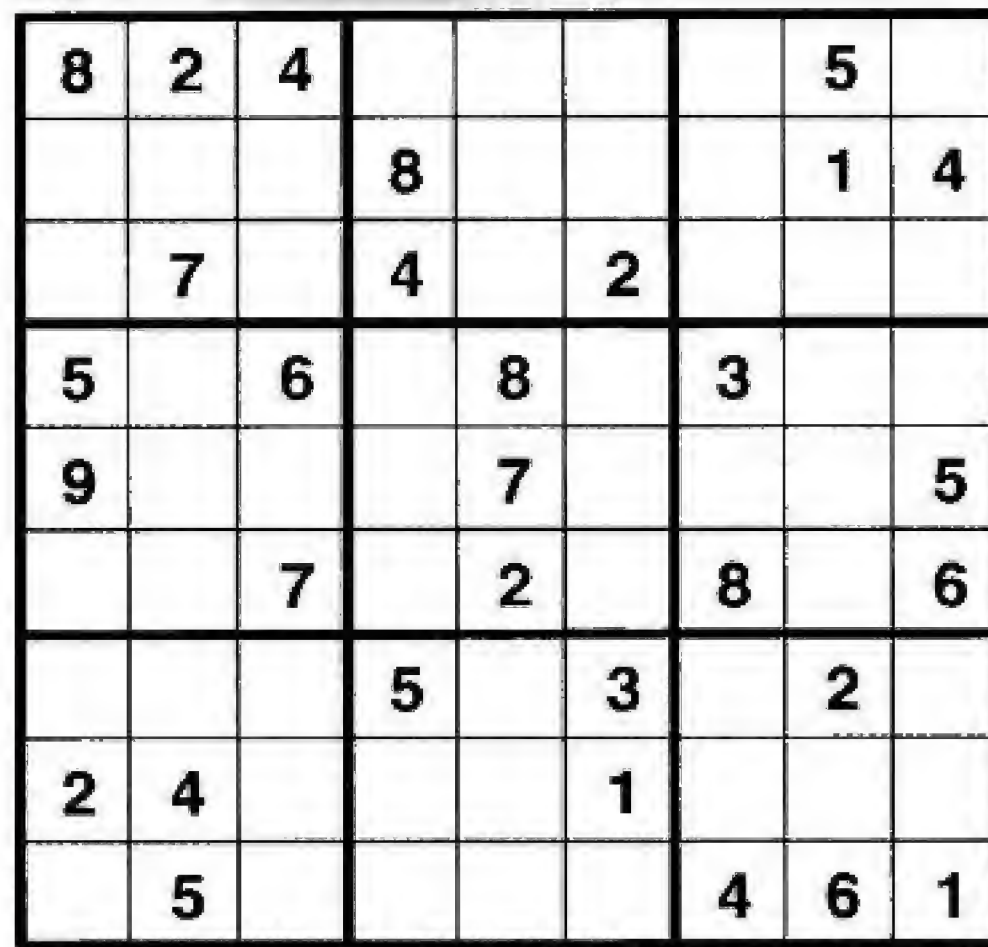
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Horacio Oduber Hospital
Tel.5274000
EMERGENCY
Telephone 911
POLICE HDQS
Telephone 100

TAXI
C.V. TAS
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In Oranjestad:
Tel. 582-2116, 582-1604
582-5447
In San Nicolas
Tel. 584-5160, 584-6602
professional taxi services
Tel. 588-0035

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Sudoku



SOLUTION

1	9	4	6	2	5	8	3	7
8	5	1	9	4	6	7	2	3
2	6	5	7	3	8	9	1	4
9	8	3	2	1	7	4	6	5
5	7	1	9	2	6	3	8	4
2	4	7	8	9	3	1	5	6
6	9	8	2	5	7	1	4	3
7	1	2	4	6	9	5	3	8
3	2	6	1	9	7	4	2	5

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is Never repeated in a row or column. In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their 'home away from home' in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the ac-



tion, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba con-

tributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area also to house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great

demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

Discover authentic Aruban cuisine at The Queen's



Mama Luisa hard at work in the kitchen

Enjoy a true taste of Aruba without having to travel in the charming surroundings of The Queen's Restaurant in the Palm Beach Plaza Mall. Your host, Varella Innocencia has brought her very popular Oranjestad eatery to Palm Beach, showcasing authentic local cuisine only a short walk away from the major resorts.

The "hipper" and elegant new digs offer beautiful views, but Mama Luisa's magical touch in the kitchen is what

first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. She can be counted on to be conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generation. As Varella says, "My mom loves and lives to cook. Even when she is not at work in the restaurant, she is experimenting with new dishes all day at home."

She is the Queen of the Kitchen."

Be sure to try Luisa's acclaimed "Carni Stoba di Ma-

machi" - "Grandma's Beef Stew," or their fresh, whole snapper, with Mama Luisa's delectable salsa criollo. Don't miss the specialty of the house, a favorite local delicacy, Keshi Yena - "Filled Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It is satisfying and particularly memorable. Regional side dishes and some of Mama's secret recipe prepara-

tion of banana hasa and creamy potatoes provide a deliciously picturesque meal.

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to go, reasonably priced and easily accessible. A full menu can be seen on their website, <http://www.thequeensaruba.com/>.

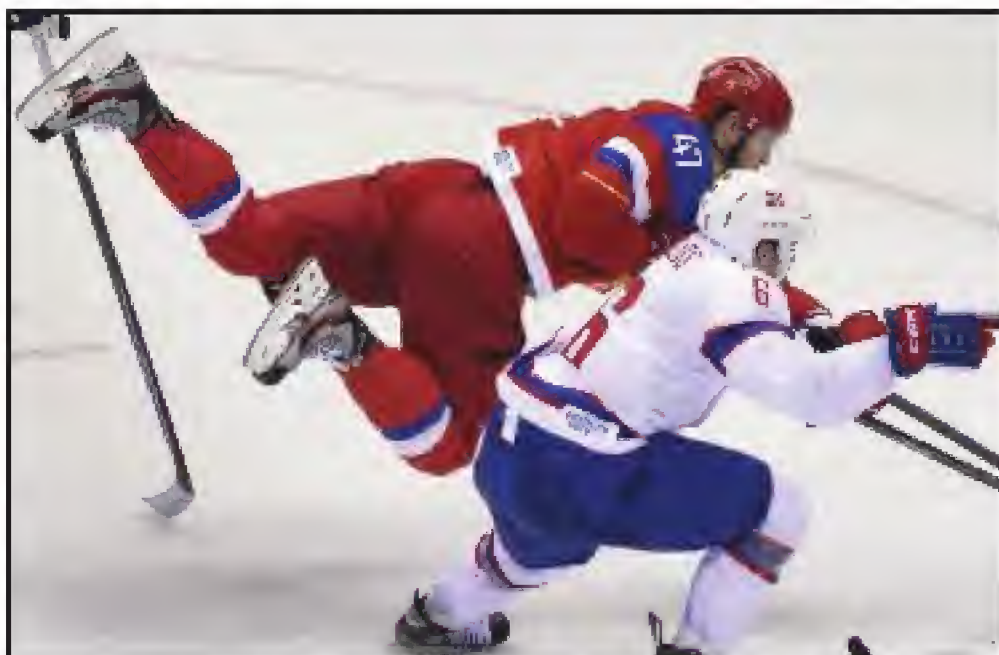
Aside from an extensive regular menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season, and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't be shy about asking for something that may not be on the menu, as they are always eager to please.

The Queen's is open daily from 3:00 pm - 11:00 pm, offering both indoor and outdoor dining. telf. 5860606.

Who's winning what at the Winter Olympics



Norway's Emil Hegle Svendsen (9) and France's Martin Fourcade (2) cross the finish line in the Men's Biathlon 15 km Mass Start



Norway's Jonas Holoes (bottom) vies with Russia's Alexander Radulov

SOCHI (AFP) - Who won what at the 2014 Winter Olympics on Tuesday.

Biathlon - 15km mass start
Norway's Emil Hegle Svendsen held off a desperate late charge from the fast-finishing Martin Fourcade of France to take gold in the men's 15km biathlon mass start after a photo finish.

Svendsen slowed up as he raised his hands in victory just before crossing the line but he had apparently failed to notice Fourcade, who flung himself across the finish.

Both were given the same time of 42min 29.1sec but Svendsen, who will count himself lucky, was awarded the gold by a whisker on the photo. Fourcade was aiming for his third gold at Sochi after winning the pursuit and the individual. Ondrej Moravec of the Czech Republic took the bronze.

Norway's Ole Einar Bjoern-dalen, seeking a record 13th medal at Winter Olympic Games, will have to wait until the relays after coming 22nd. **Nordic skiing - Large hill/10km**

Norway took gold and silver in the large hill nordic combined at the Sochi Olympics, dealing best with rainy conditions in the 10km ski phase.

Joergen Graabak took gold, finishing the ski phase in 23min 27.5sec with his compatriot Magnus Moan taking silver 0.6sec behind. Bronze went to Fabian Riessle of Germany.

Freestyle - Halfpipe

World champion David Wise of the United States added Olympic gold to his trophy collection with victory in the ski halfpipe.

In awful weather, with heavy snow falling all around, Wise scored 92.00 points to head a podium made up entirely of world champions.

Canadian Mike Riddle (90.60), the man Wise deposed as world champion, took silver with the man he succeeded, Kevin Rolland (88.60) of France earning the bronze.

Alpine skiing - giant slalom

Slovenian Tina Maze won her second gold of the Sochi Olympics when she added the giant slalom title to her downhill crown.

In tricky weather conditions that included heavy snow, torrential rain and fog, the 30-year-old clocked a combined total of 2min 38.87sec over the two runs.

Super-G gold medallist Anna Fenninger of Austria claimed silver at just 0.07sec, with defending champion Viktoria Rebensburg of Germany taking bronze a further 0.20sec adrift.

Violin virtuoso Vanessa Mae, representing Thailand, ended in 67th and last place but had the consolation of finishing the two runs unlike 22 other competitors.

Short track - 3,000m relay

South Korea won the women's short track 3,000m relay gold ahead of Canada and Italy. Defending champions China were disqualified in the final.

South Korea regained the title they had won on four successive occasions before China broke the streak at Vancouver in 2010.

Ice hockey

Alexander Radulov scored twice as Russia beat Norway 4-0 to reach the quarter-finals of the Olympic ice hockey tournament but the hosts' NHL stars once again failed to shine.

Sergei Bobrovski stopped 22 shots for the shutout and Pavel Datsyuk had three assists for the Russians, who will face Finland today for a spot in the semi-finals.

Russia is desperate to win gold on their home soil after crashing out of the Vancouver Games in the quarters four years ago.

Radulov redeemed himself with his two goals and an assist Tuesday in front of a crowd of 11,423 at the Bolshoi Ice Dome.

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BRIEFS:



Norway's Emil Hegle Svendsen (9) competes in the second round shoot in the Men's Biathlon 15 km Mass Start in Sochi Olympics games.



SAN ANTONIO (AFP) - San Antonio Spurs guard Tony Parker will be sidelined "for the foreseeable future" with "a variety of maladies" according to Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, ESPN reported on Tuesday. The 31-year-old Frenchman is averaging 17.7 points and 6.2 assists for the NBA's Southwest division leaders, who reached the All-Star Game break at 38-15 with the second-best record in the Western Conference and fourth-best in the league.



MIAMI (AFP) - Miami Dolphins offensive lineman Richie Incognito apologised Tuesday for remarks made last week after being named the central figure in a National Football League bullying scandal. A 144-page report following an investigation that lasted more than three months and included more than 100 interviews found Incognito and two of his teammates guilty of harassing Jonathan Martin and another teammate as well as an assistant trainer. Incognito offered apologies to Wells, Martin and Dolphins owner Stephen Ross, who came out harshly against the tormenting behaviour after the report found a "pattern of harassment".

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"Help our young people to continue practicing sports!" - Eric Gomez



ORANJESTAD - In connection with the 80th year celebration of Aruba's Racing Club, they spoke to the pillar of



sports on Aruba, Eric Gomez. Eric Gomez is not only considered the pillar of sports, but in particular, the pillar of RCA. During the celebration ceremony Eric Gomez had the honor of the presence of the Governor of Aruba, Mr. Fredis Refinol as well as the Prime Minister, Mike Eman. They officiated in the baptism of a commemorative book on the 80 year existence of RCA.

When asked how he sees these 80 years, Eric Gomez indicated that he is very pleased with what he is doing, because he is working for the youth and the members. He is also very

pleased that they were able to repair the RCA Clubhouse in such a short time.

Since Eric's 5th birthday he came to RCA. At that time Table Tennis was being practiced at RCA. In this way Eric played in every division. Little by little he began helping with giving massages. He does this up to today.

Eric Gomez gave a brief message to and for our young people saying, we must help our young people to continue practicing sports. We must never stop our young people from practicing sports...let them kick every ball.

Chiara Petrocchi wins Gold, Angelo Rodriguez, Jourde Klaber and Sofia Petrocchi Bronze at the Canada Taekwondo Open



ORANJESTAD - In Montreal, Chiara Petrochi, representing Aruba, wasn't happy with her silver medal from the Saturday events of the Canada Taekwondo Open and participated in the Sunday Recreational Class to win Gold in the Under 37 Kilo category. The petite Chiara is a fantastic role model for island youth and is becoming famous internationally in Taekwondo sport. During 2013, Chiara gracefully represented Aruba during international matches in Suriname, Curacao, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, United States and Mexico. Her highest achievement being the Silver Medal at the Pan-American Open in Mexico. Angelo, Jourde and Sofia won Bronze in the Canada Open. Coach Theodore Rodriguez is said to be very happy with the achievements and his team's rankings. Now they are preparing for the USA Open, which will take place this coming week-end in Las Vegas. Congratulations to the Aruba Taekwondo Federation with their new board, which is working very hard to take Aruba forward in the sport of Taekwondo!

Pabien Guys!

THE MORNING NEWS

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The Residences are exclusive luxurious full ownership condominiums nestled within the lush greens of The Links at Divi Aruba golf course, offering you the choice of luxurious: Studio, One, Two, Three and Four Bedroom Condominiums. Our 4 Bedroom Condominium offers 5 full bathrooms, and an occupancy capacity for 10 - 12.

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Divi Resorts has 5 resorts in Aruba, in addition to The Links at Divi Aruba golf course, and the Alhambra Casino Shops & Restaurants. For years we've offered high quality all inclusive and timeshare vacations. Many of our guests have found that one vacation to Aruba per year is simply not enough! Our solution: The Residences at Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort.

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For more information about The Residences, visit our Sales Office located in the Golf Clubhouse at the Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort. For questions or to schedule your appointment to view a condominium:

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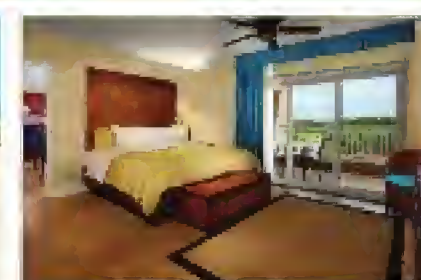
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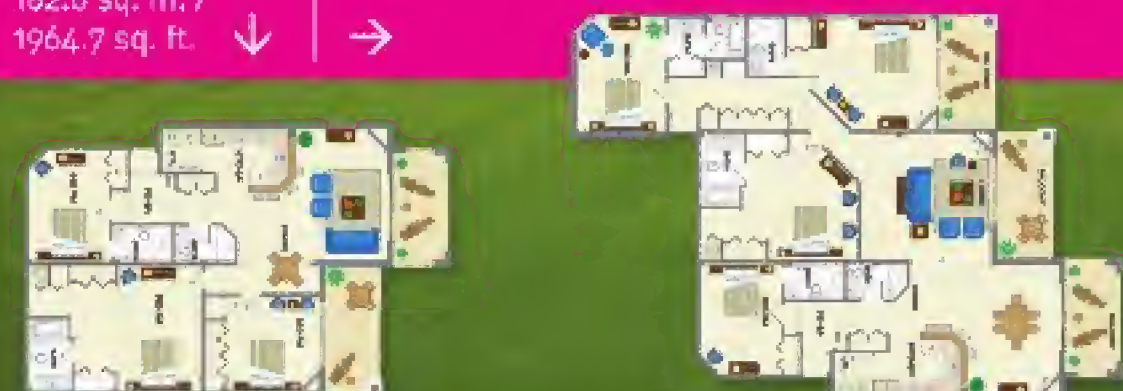


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3 bedroom BC
182.6 sq. m. /
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4 bedroom South Wing | 274.2 sq. m. / 2950.3 sq. ft. →



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- Membership with RCI vacation exchange program
- Complimentary use of fitness center
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- Garbage collection
- Green keeping
- Condo Liaison on duty
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- Complimentary use of driving range
- Preferred tee times
- Divi managed rental program

Olympics: Men Snowboard - cross



ROSA KHUTOR (AFP) - Frenchman Pierre Vaultier called it a miracle after he won Olympic men's snowboard cross gold on Tuesday, just two months after a serious knee injury almost wrecked his Sochi hopes. The 26-year-old tore his cruciate knee ligament in a race in Lake Louise, Canada, on December 21. But despite not even having an operation on the damaged ligament, Vaultier's knee held together through fog, rain and carnage to emerge victorious in Russia. Russian Nikolay Olyunin took silver. American Alex Deibold passed France's Paul-Henri de le Rue right at the death to take bronze. Crashes were aplenty throughout the competition but were not necessarily the reason for the favorites failing to progress. Italian snowboarder Omar Visintin suffered a fractured hip in the competition. Visintin was leading his semi-final at the time with winner Pierre Vaultier before the crash happened. The Italian Ski Federation (Fisi) said Visintin would be out of competition for four weeks.

Olympics: Dutch speed skaters seal fourth podium sweep in 10,000m

SOCHI (AFP) - Jorrit Bergsma took gold in the men's 10,000m on Tuesday as the Netherlands swept the speed skating podium at the Sochi Olympics for the fourth time.

In yet another statement of Dutch dominance, Bergsma crossed the line in a new Olympic record time of 12min 44.45sec, ahead of Sven Kramer (12:49.02) and Bob de Jong (13:07.19) Speed



skating powerhouse the Netherlands had already dominated the podiums in the men's 500m, 5,000m and women's 1,500m. They have now won 19 of 27 medals up for grabs at the Adler Arena, with six gold medals out of nine events so far. Bergsma, 28, skated in the penultimate pair and had to watch as Kramer, racing with defending champion Lee Seung-Hoon of South Korea, went last. Kramer was on world record pace halfway through his race but he faded and had to settle for silver. "It is a fantastic feeling," said Bergsma. "I knew with my current shape I could do it, but these are the Olympic Games. You have to cope with the pressure and control your nerves. Kramer's silver means he now has six Olympic medals -- equalling the Dutch record for the Winter Games held by Ireen Wust and Rintje Ritsma. "Being satisfied with silver is not my view on top sport. That is not why I train, that is not why I race. I race to win," said Kramer, 27. Bob de Jong is the first male speed skater to win at least one medal at four different Olympic Winter Games. Aged 37, he is also the second oldest male speed skater to win an Olympic medal and the oldest in 86 years.